

Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: REPORTAGE OF TRAVELING PRESS (TV), THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 28

FOR VEST

SUMMARY: ISRAELI POW COUP LED ABC AND NBC NEWS LAST NIGHT
AND PLACED SECOND ON CBS. ALL NETS GAVE EXCEPTIONALLY
LENGTHY TREATMENT TO STORY, WITH EXTENSIVE FOOTAGE
FEATURING VALERIANI, KOPPEL AND HOTTELET. RADIO-TV
COVERAGE THIS AYEM SWITCHES TO IMMINENCE OF RESUMPTION
OF RELATIONS WITH EGYPT. END SUMMARY

1. ABC (KOPPEL): REPORTS WHEN HAK ARRIVED DAMASCUS HE
ALREADY KNEW, ACC HIGH US OFFS, HOW MANY ISRAELI POW'S
SYRIA HOLDS BUT HE STILL HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING FOR SURE
SYRIA WOULD HAND OVER LIST OR AGREE TO RED CROSS VISITS.
HAK GOT ASSURANCE ON BOTH POINTS AFTER LENGTHY CONFERENCE
WITH ASAD BUT LIST NOT HANDED OVER TIL AFTER SECOND HAK/ASAD
MEETING. ALSO REPORTS THAT SENIOR US OFFS POINTED OUT ON
SEVERAL OCCASIONS HAK GROWING WEARY OF INTERMEDIARY ROLE
IN ME BUT HAK ALSO SAID HE FEELS MORAL OBLIGATION TO DO AS
MUCH FOR SYRIANS AS HE DID FOR EGYPTIANS. REPORTS WITH
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POW LIST IN ISRAELI HANDS, MAJOR HURDLE TO DISENGAGEMENT

TALKS REMOVED. FORUM FOR THOSE TALKS, ACC SENIOR US DIPLOMAT, SHOULD BE WORKED OUT BY TIME HAK LEAVES DAMASCUS DAY AFTER TOMORROW.

2. CBS (HOTTELET): REPORTS HAK TALKED WITH ASAD FOR 7 HOURS, ASAD ALWAYS CONSCIOUS OF HIS OPPOSITION BACKED BY IRAQ NEXT DOOR. BUT HAK BROUGHT POW LIST TO ISRAEL AND ON ARRIVAL TEL AVIV SAID "I HAVE COME HERE FROM DAMASCUS WHERE I BELIEVE WE MADE GOOD PROGRESS ON SOME OF ISRAEL'S MOST CRUCIAL PROBLEMS." (DIRECT QUOTE). REPORTS THAT POW'S WERE TRUMP CARDS IN WEAK SYRIAN HAND AND DAMASCUS HARDLINERS WANTED TO USE THEM AS NVN HAD AGAINST US.

3. NBC (VALERIANI): REPORTS HAK ALREADY HAD BASIC POW LIST WHEN HE ARRIVED DAMASCUS. LIST SENT TO HAK WEEK BEFORE IN CONNECTION WITH ARAB REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE ME MISSION. REPORTS IT WAS GOOD OMEN CAMERAS PERMITTED TO FILM HAK ARRIVAL AT AIRPORT AND FURTHER POSITIVE SIGN THAT ASAD RECEIVED HAK SOON AFTERWARD. REPORTS HAK FLEW ON TO ISRAEL BRINGING WITH HIM, IN ADDITION TO POW LIST, UNDERSTANDING POW'S WOULD BE RELEASED AS PART OF ANY DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. REPORTS ISRAELIS NOW EXPECTED TO FORMULATE PROPOSALS ON SEPARATING FORCES FROM SYRIAN FORCES IN GOLAN AND HAK HOPES THESE PROPOSALS WILL BE READY BY FRIDAY TO TAKE BACK WITH HIM TO DAMASCUS.

MORNING RADIO:

CBS (HOTTELET): REPORTS HAK TRIP TO CAIRO ALMOST PLEASURE TRIP TO OLD FRIEND AND EVERY EXPECTATION FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WILL BE RESUMED WITH US FLAG RAISED ABOVE AMEMBASSY TODAY. REPORTS SADAT WORKED HARD TO CREATE CLIMATE WHICH MADE ISRAEL/SYRIA BREAKTHROUGH POSSIBLE. IN RETURN, EGYPT GAINING ACCESS TO US ECONOMIC POWER AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE AS WELCOME COUNTER-POISE TO ITS TIES WITH USSR. CASEY

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